









REAL PULP COMICS, #2. @ JAN 1973 BY LEGLIE CABARGA, CHARLES DALLAS, WILL FOWLER, BILL GRIFFITH, ART SPIEGELMAN, S. CLAY WILSON, AND POCER BRAND (EDITOR), 155 WHITNEY, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. 94131 PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE PRINT MINT, 830 FOLGER AVE. BERKELEY, CALIF. 94710



### IN THE HEART OF CYANIDE CITY, IN A RUNDOWN HOTEL, 3% PENNIES WORTH OF DIME-A-DOZEN HOODS ARE GATHERED.....









NO.MY FRIENDS...NO LONG-







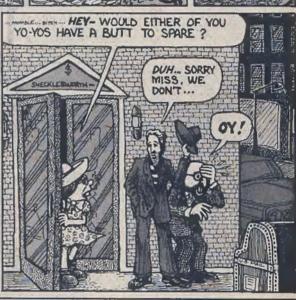
WELLTHEN ... YOU TWO, GO LOTTER



































HIS POLICETY PRODUCT VICE STORES SALES OF THE SALES OF TH









OPHER SECURE ASSESSMENT LES SYND SIGNAL BATTER OF PEU WIGHDON US! PERSEN THE SCOULE TYPE PEUR DESERTED

ESECULOSSMOTH TOX MURELL HEBUITATION....



#### THE VINEX'S RAZOR SHARP SENSES QUICKLY PUT HIM ON FAMILIA'S SCENT ....

































#### THE JUB-TEEN INATCH INATCH" ~ O-PROGRAM NOTES ~



GREGORY LABONZA, THE MAN WHO PLAYS THE WHEREWAY LABOREA, THE MAN WHO PLAYS THE VIPER IS WELL KNOWN AS HOLLYWOOD'S MOST LIBERATED MALE. WHEN ASKED HOW HE VIEWS THE CHARACTER HE PORTRAYS, HE COMMENTED: "I THINK THE VIPER THE REALLY A PUTHY-CAT!" I KNOW HE ITH THUPPOTHED TO BE NATHY!, BUT BENEATH IT ALL. HE'TH JUTHT A THWEET LITTLE BOY WHO WITH BADLY FOTTY TRAINED!" ANYHOW, THAT'TH WHAT I THINK. REALLY!"

ART SPIEGELMAN, DIRECTOR AND CREATOR OF THE ORIGINAL WIFER ENSORS, HAS BEEN MISSING SINCE FEBRUARY IS, 1972. ON THAT PAY HIS ASSISTANT REPORTED TO THEIR PLUSH SAN FRANCISCO STUDIO, AND FOUND 140 POUNDS OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE PRIME GROUND CHUCK LYING NEAR SPEGELINARY BLODDED DRAWING BORN LYING NEAR SPEGELINARY BLODDED DRAWING BORN SKEETER GRANT, CREATOR OF POOT THE SPUNO PUPPY-THE WELL-LOVED 1940'S COMIC STRIP, HAS COME OUT OF RETIREMENT TO CONTINUE THE VIPER!



# THE LOVE THE A Caesar Steele Mystery

The story so far: For six weeks, San Francisco has been plagued by the evil machinations of an unknown murderer; a brutal, vicious, cold-blooded killer whose crimes are made even more heinous by their bizarre sexual twists.

The police, driven to distraction by the series of blind alleys, dead ends, and wild goose chases their investigations have led to, reluctantly agreed to allow private investigator Caesar Steele entry into the case. But even the hickory-slick brain of of the country's number one crime mind has had little to work on.

A few leads, supplied by Doctor Arvel Marquard, the famed psychic and mentalist, proved only to be clever ruses designed to make fools out of the criminal's pursuers.

And even as Steele chafed at the bit, the city was shocked by the most horrible crimes so farthe infamous love knot murders, in which the vic-

What made it worse, the killer always chose young people because of their large throbbing choads and their clamp-tight cunts. Steele, realizing that each new crime necessarily exposed the killer to the possibility of making mistakes, wasted no time at the scene of the crimes, allowing the police to overwork those areas with scientific equipment, and instead ran down a list of names supplied to him by Dr. Marquard—people who at first seemed remotely connected with the victims but under the needle-sharp probing of Steele, admitted deep involvement with many of them.

Things were closing in, Steele was sure of it.

The last of these names, however, Miss Merrily Purvis, proved intransigent when questioned by Steele, forcing him to use subtler techniques of interrogation.

After plying Purvis with his mixture of wit, charm, and overbearing potency, Steele soon had



tims were found jammed together in forced copulation. The criminal had forced the girls to lie still, while their lovers were strangled, causing enormous death erections that swelled to preposterous sizethen while the poor girls squirmed violently in a confusion of fear and sexual gratification beyond their wildest dreams, they too were killed, instantly, with hatpins, and in its death spasm, the victim's cunt would lock them both together. Police and doctors often had trouble separating the couples.

a willing and pliant young woman in his hands. But it took some prodding in the right places to discover the guilty secret that Purvis clutched deep between her nipples. Purvis, it turned out, was not what she pretended.

Purvis was a virgin.

Determined to at least clear that matter up, Steele stripped her down and fired a quick glance across her body, a glance that took in her dark taffy hair, her soft mellow skin, her lifting breasts with their hard sharp points, the loose thin stream of blond hair that coursed down from her navel, thickening and darkening as it crossed the curve of her lower belly, until it emptied out in a broad thick bush of hair between her legs. After a glance like that, he was sure she deserved everything that was coming to her. But as he stepped over to her and took her in his arms, a look of terror shot across her face and with a shriek, she collapsed at Steele's naked feet.

#### CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

She was dead. My pecker sat back down in my lap and bent its head over slowly, like it suddenly



had something to think about. Well, shit, I guess it did. It pissed me off, Murdered. Just before I got my rocks off, too.

Now I was stuck with a stiff witness and a wilted pecker, just when I'd been planning to stick a stiff pecker into a wilted witness. My hands still clutched Miss Purvis's knees, raising little red welts in the flesh that was slowly turning grey. I'd just gotten her to open up a little.

I looked around the room. It was empty except for the two crumpled piles of clothing on the floor. Purvis's black panties lay atop the pile that had once belonged to her, and I admired the twin circles of crinkled white lace on either side of the crotch. She'd looked pretty nice in those pants, I remembered.

My cock stuck up its head as I thought it over, acting like a worried hound whose master won't let it track. I rubbed it a little to make it feel better. Too bad, but we weren't going to get fuck number one off of Purvis.

I looked her body over: the rosy blush of her nipples was fading before my eyes. Poor virginal Purvis. My eyes played with her thighs, coming to rest on the gently closing folds of her cooze: poor uptight frigid quim. So close to realizing its dream, and now that hope was gone forever.

Christ almighty.

But then it hit me. Why couldn't Miss Purvis's dream be realized just as well in death? My cock perked up as the idea seemed to grow. It was what she wanted most, she'd told me. (My conscience gave me a few pangs over the idea of putting it to a dead woman, but, what the hell, it was still hetero after all, and anyway she hadn't struck me as being a very responsive kind of chick.) A tingle of joy and relief caressed my spine as I realized the truth of all this.

It was the right thing to do, I was sure of it. My cock was sure of it too, swelling itself up ramrod straight, like it was proud of the nobility of the gesture. Though the emotion I was feeling wasn't exactly pride.

I spread her legs open quickly and plunged it in.

Her tubes gave way slowly, oh my Jesus was she tight. I struck the springy elastic barrier of her maidenhead, and forced it, but it didn't quite tear loose. It was blocked in pretty solid, and death had stretched it even tighter.

I pulled back and jammed it in, hard. There was a soft tearing sound, and then with a pop, I was in. As I pierced her, a strange thought crossed my mind: When you pop a dead virgin's cherry, does she bleed? I didn't know, and I didn't stop to find out.

It was getting pretty nice. A little abrasive, though: she was drying up pretty fast, and she had pubic hair like a brillo pad. Her body felt cold and rubbery . . . a little bouncy . . . especially those boobs I'd wanted so much . . . kind of fun to do, really . . .

(Shit . . . uff-uff . . . somebody coming . . . uff-



uff ... foot ... uff ... steps ... uff ... the murderer ... uff-uff-uff ... returning ... uff-uff-uffufff ... hurry up boy they're a-comin' ... uffnuffnuffnuffnuffnuffnuff.)

No time to think. I doubled my stroke and popped in a hurry. It came in an explosive gasping burst—as good as you could expect from this kind of one-sided passion. I pulled it out and checked to see if there was any blood—but the steps were getting closer.

I had to do something, quick. First problem was Purvis's bone-hard body—it had to go somewhere. I could hear the steps stop just outside the door. The closet! For Purvis's body, and maybe some clothes for me.

I dragged her over by the heels. Her naked belly made a rough slithering sound across the flagstone floor. I lifted her up, clamped my hand on her butt, and held her tight against me. Gently as I could, I opened the closet door.

Shit! No duds.

Purvis was stiff as a board. I had to stand her up by the heels and lean her into the corner. Then I swung back to the door. Naked or not—I was ready.

The ornate brass knob on the paneled door described a slow well-oiled circle, and noiselessly the door swung inward. Then with a crash, it burst wide open. I tensed my body to dodge the shot I knew was sure to come. But it didn't . . .

She was black and beautiful. She wore a dark

mesh dress over hard black skin that glowed like oil, and her hair fell in heavy dark waves across her shoulders and broke apart just above her breasts. In the center of her breasts dark wrinkles glowed a heavy coffee brown and her erect nipples stood out from these and protruded through the dress like dum-dum bullets. Instinctively I looked at her crotch. Her loins were swathed in sheer nylon panties, as dark as her own rich skin. My eyes glanced from there to her right hand which she held leveled by her hip. In it, she held a heavy automatic.

"Don't move a muscle," she said.

"What about my love muscle?" I shot back,

"I'm not afraid of that," she said. I believed her,

"Where's Purvis?" she said, looking me hard in the face. I didn't move. Her eyes roved the room quickly, never straying too far from mine. Then they found what they were looking for, in a pale wet stream that trailed across the floor and trickled towards the closet. She smiled and edged her way over to the closet door. The soft wool mesh of her dress brushed lightly against her skin, like cotton across a window screen. I watched with pleasure the sensitivity of her nipples that swelled as the fibers stroked them. She reached the door, and smiled knowingly. Then, triumphantly, she threw the door open.

Purvis fell out like a planked fish.

(Continued on page 32)

THE SECOND AND FINAL INSTALLMENT OF

# THE FLOATING HEAD

SEE REAL PULP #1.

AFTER TWENTY
YEARS, I HAD
EVERYTHING I
WANTED, AND
THE PROMISE
OF EVERYTHING
I WOULD WANT
I HAD CARRIED
OUT A BEALUTIFUL
REVENGE ON
DR BARNARD
CHRISTIAN



WHO HAD
WANTED TO USE
ME FOR HIS
OWN PETTY ENDS,
ON JACK DRUMM



MY CHILDHOOD TORMENTOR, ON SABRINA FELDSPAR



WHO LAUGHED AT ME TOO OPTEN; AND ON JOHNNY CARTER



WHO HAP THE GALL TO TRY TO OPPOSE ME SABRINA WAS ALIVE, RECUPERATING IN A SANITARIUM; THE OTHER THREE HAD DIED WHEN THEIR HEADS EXPLODED ARM MEN MYSTERIOUSLY





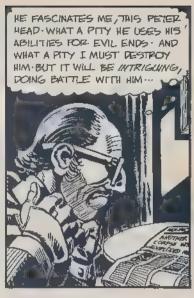
ONLY ONE MAN STILL STOOD IN MY WAY!

"THE MYSTIC DR. I.D DRU, MASTER OF "WRITE
MAGIC", THE SOLE ADVERSARY WHO MIGHT
YET PROVE A WOFTHY FOE "









ME, I WAS EXPECTING IT.

HE STUPE I KNEW WHAT HE WAS THINKING I KNEW THE TYPE AND WHEN HE CONTACTED

















MEANWHILE, SABRINA HAD RECENTLY BEEN RELEASED FROM THE SANITARIUM, AND WAS MARRIED AGAIN...TO, OF ALL THINGS, FLOYD CLAUDY, WHO USED TO SLUG ME IN THE SHOULDERS AND ONCE PRANTSED ME, IN HIGH SCHOOL

HOW ABOUT THAT SABZINA & MUST ADMIT I WAS JUST TOO EMPTY-HEADED TO BE TRAUMA-TIZED FOR LONG

HAVEN'T REALLY

GOTTEN HER OUT & OF MY MIND.

HMM ... CLAUDY HE WAS ALWAYS FRUSTPATED BECAUSE THE ONE TIME HE DATED SABRINA HE GOT SOME TIT BUT COULDN'T GET ANY ASS ...



"THEY'RE HONEYMOONING AT THE BACKWOODS BEARTRAP MOTEL AND MOUNTAIN LODGE: I THINK I'LL PLAY A LITTLE PRANK ON MY OLD FRIEND FLOYD . AND HIS CHARMING BRIDE ... HEN HEN HEN ... A LITTLE PRANK ... "





















BOOK OLD CLAUDY I FLOATING HEADS, CORPSES COMING BACK TO LIFE, KNIVES MOVING THROUGH THE AIR .. HE JUST WASN'T READY FOR IT







BUT HE GRACIOUSLY TOOK MY PLACE AT THE TABLE, PAGGER AND ALL (NOT THAT HE FELT THE SLIGHTEST DESIRE TO DO OTHERWISE).













When sabring woke from her faint, my persuasive charms dispelled her initial fear I took her back with Me to my apartment, leaving claudy for the motel-keepers to find



OF COURSE DRU WAS KEEPING CLOSE TRACK OF MY ACTIONS THE MOTEL INCIDENT ENRAGED HIM, BUT ONLY LATER WAS I TO LEARN THAT IT WAS MORE THAN MERE SELF-RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

## MURDER IN

May 15 (IPU) The Backwoods Bess trep Motel and Mountain Lodge become the ocene of the year's most griely murder last night when ready. wed Floyd Cloudy was found dead in his cabin with an arrists degger in his back Museing is Mrs Charley, who only recently recovered from a natvous collepse following the death of her first Insband, Police Captern Jack Drumm This promises to be one of the hottest marter otestes in quite s while, and don't forget you read about "Murder Motel", as we've diabed it, in these pages first About the no events, Murder Motel's manager, Del Wi had that to easy the mode the publicat











I WAS PUZZLED, THOUGH, WHY SHOULD HE RISK A DIRECT CONFRONTATION IN MY DOMAIN, WHERE I WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGES OF SURPRISE AND ORIENTATION? LITTLE DID I KNOW THAT IT WAS MERELY HIS FUCKED-UP EGO AND LIBIDO PORCING HIS HAND! I CAN'T DENY, HE COVERED THEM WELL.



































DRU'S WHOLE INNER MIND OPENED ITSELF UP IT WAS THE DAM BREAKING SEEMS HE WAS SABRINA'S UNICLE! IMAGINE!

WHEN SHE WAS NINE YEARS OLD AND HE TWENTY HE FELL URGENTLY AND HOPELESSLY IN LOVE WITH HER





· SOON AFTER, WHEN HER PARENTS ASKED HIM TO BABYSIT WHILE THEY SAW A MOVIE, HE TALKED HER INTO CLIMBING IN BED WITH HIM, BUT THE PARENTS DON'T STAY FOR THE SECOND FEATURE







SABRINA WASN'T PARTICULARLY UPSET BUT TO AVOID SCANDAL THEY SENT DRU TO EUROPE HE THEN WENT TO THE ORIENT, WHERE FOR THIRTY YEARS HE STUDIED AND MASTERED THE "MYSTIC ARTS" ... OR "WHITE MAGIC"





TO DO GOOD ALL I WANTED WAS TO DO GOOD IT THOUGHT-











WELL I DECIDED NOT TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD TO HELL WITH IT WHAT FOR ?I HAVE ALL I WANT AS A MATTER OF FACT, OLD DRU (REST HIS SOUL) REALLY HAD THE RIGHT IDEA IT IS MORE TROUBLE THAN IT'S WORTH, CIVILIZATION



WAS ON MY WAY TO THE EDITOR WITH THIS STORY WHEN A CHANCE ENCOUNTER ON A BUS PROVIDED ME WITH THE PEFFECT INTRODUCTION. I WENT STRAIGHT BACK TOMY GARDET AND PUT A FRESH PIECE OF PAPER ON MY CARD TABLE AND GOT ITALL DOWN WHICE I WAS STILL CONVINCED IT WAS NECESSARY.

ALSO, I SWEAR I HAD ACID ONLY ONCE -- BACK IN '68!







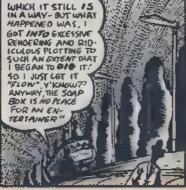










































Weakens the government Assault force!













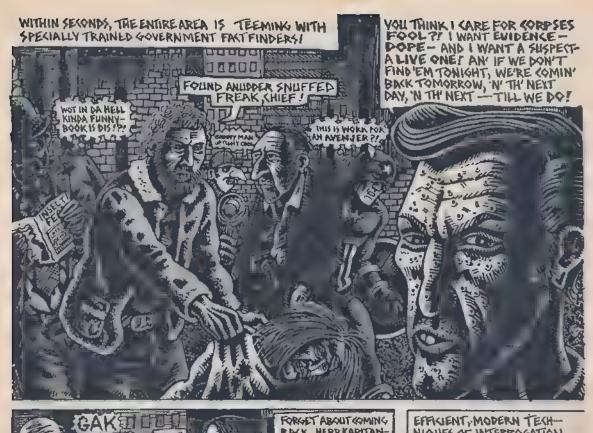


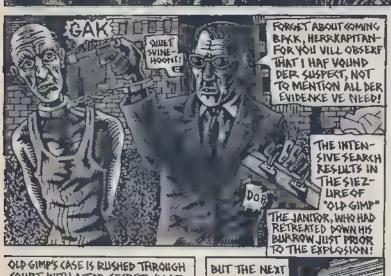




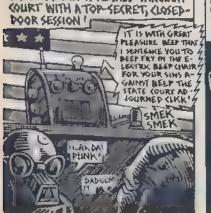


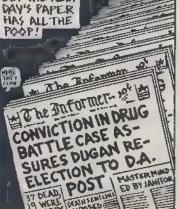














A PRISONER ON DEATH ROW (AN ONLY THINK. THEY SAY A LOT OF MEN FIND THEIR ANSWERS DURING THOSE LAST HOURS—BUT THEN ITS TOO LATE!

DURNDEST THING I EVER
SEED! ALL I KIN FIGGER
IS IF THEIR TORTURE
SOMEHOW FILLED UP MY C
BALLS WITH VAST AMOUNTS
OF ELECTRICITY!! I'M ONLY C
TAPPIN' A FEW VOLTS
WHEN I PEE - BUT IF
I COULD POP EM! SHIT
WOULDN'T THAT BE SOME
FIREWORKS!! HELL, I
AIN'T BEEN POTENT
SINGE '56... DAMN GOOD
YEAR, TOO...

THINKING LEADS TO IDEAS, AND BEFORE LONG, OLD GIMP COMES UP WITH A PLAN! (ALL-ING LIPON THE KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCEFULNESS GAINED FROM 57 YEARS AS A JAN!—TOR, HE DEFTLY ATTACKS THE PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL FIXTURES OF HIS CELL!



FOR HOURS HE UNCEASINGLY WORKS IN TOTAL DARKNESS. THEN, FINALLY, HE HEARS THEM-A FAINT (RESCENDE OF FOOT-STEPS EXHOING FROM FAR UP THE CORRIDER - BUT STEADILY GROWING LOUDER, DRAWING



ES A CLIMAX AND ABRUPTLY





OLD GIMP QUICKLY MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE PRISON TO THE OUTSIDE, INCINERATING ALL WHO DARE OPPOSE HIM! INTOXICATED WITH FREEDOM AND POWER, HE STALKS OFF THROUGH THE NIGHT, VOWING TO BRING VENGENCE TO THOSE WHO WOULD HAVE DESTROYED HIM!



BACK AT THE SMOLDERING RUIN THAT WAS ONCE (ITY JAIL, THE GOVERNMENT FACTFINDERS ARE AGAIN ON THE JOB! A FEW EYEWITNESSES GIVE FRANTIK ACCOUNTS OF THE INCREDIBLE









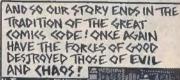




INCREDIBLE FORCE - CAN'T MOVE









BUT ANSWER US THIS, KAPTAIN L'AMER-IKA, AS YOU LEAVE THIS SEENE OF CARNAGE — HAD YOU BEEN THE QNE TO FAIL THIS DAY, WOULD YOU HAVE DIED AS SATISFIED AS OLD GIMP? ATE & SCRIPT C. DALLAS 71

#### CHAPTER FORTY-NINE "CAESAR GETS IT"

Her eyes looked at me questioningly. The answers that should have been there didn't show. We were both as tight as a pair of clams. If she wanted to play dumb, that was all right with me.

I grinned at her.

"Find what you're looking for?" I asked.

She'd been surprised. There wasn't any doubt there. But she covered up well, despite the mesh dress. Only for a second when her heavy lashes dropped and closed her eyes. And then they were open again; open for business.

"Some skeleton," she said.

I shrugged that one off. "It's a big closet," I said.

I looked her over carefully, taking the long slow route with plenty of time for interesting side trips. Purvis lay between us like the Rubicon. If I decided to cross over, I wanted to be sure of the territory on the other side. The big sculptured nozzle of the heavy caliber automatic showed she knew her business.

"Let's talk turkey," I said. I wanted to get down with it.

"Pigeons," she said. "Two dead ones." And she pulled the trigger on the .45.

The crack of the bullet breaking wind at the muzzle shattered into the corner of the room. It should have been all over. But it wasn't. She'd telegraphed the punch. I'd seen itchy fingers before, and the way she'd held the gun I'd expected some rash activities.

I dove across Purvis's empty belly and hit the bitch low, like you hit a tackling dummy. The bullet didn't even part my hair. Her lungs collapsed like popcorn bags and we hit the floor together, me on top.

The gun flew out of her hand and went clatter-

ing away across the marble floor like a frightened crab. I sat up, pinioning her like a vise with my thighs. She had me mad and I wanted to settle a lot of things by messing her up. I knotted both hands together into a fist the size of a picnic ham and swung them back above my shoulder to strike her.

"Caesar," she said. "Don't."

I looked down at her soft dark face. Her crisp black eyes, so hard and defiant before, had mellowed, and now they were on so yielding. There was tenderness there, and understanding. I could feel her stomach muscles rippling against my thighs where I had her straddled and pinned: once hard and frightened—now limp with sudden easy desire. A coy smile brushed her lips. "Please," she whispered.

"Doll," I said. "Somebody's got to pay for this

crummy day."

And then I hit her.

The blow snapped her head off to the side and suddenly it was Brahma Bulls and Rodeo. Her stomach thrust up, rearing from the apple-hard mounds of her buttocks, writhing and twisting under me in an effort to get away. I clamped my knees together tighter to keep her quiet, but her hard-muscled body continued to work and squirm.

Her hands clawed up at me frantically, scratching the air as they tried for my eyes, my ear, my nose, my throat. I grabbed them and held them still.

She had skinny wrists for such a husky girl. I held them in one hand while I worked her face over with the other, trying to settle her down.

"Settle down," I said, "or I'll twist your nipple off." I looked cheerfully down at the plum-dark nub of it, erect through the mesh of her dress.

But she didn't settle down.

"You bastard," she sputtered, and tried a spit to the eye that fell short. She seethed in a panting ecstasy of rage, her nostrils flaring with the white fire breaths.



"Look. Be good," I said, "or you'll wind up in the closet with Purvis."

"Motherfucker," she spat.

That didn't phase me, "Mom's in line with the rest of them, darlin'," I grinned.

"Cocksucker."

She was getting herself all worked up.

"Come off it baby," I growled. "You know it's all an act."

For a brief instant something replaced the angry sheen in her face, something seductive and kittenish in her eyes. Then the hot passionate glow fanned through her blood again. But I'd caught her looking. I coaxed her with a gentle squeeze of my thighs, and laughed deeply into her eyes . . . until she smiled.

Her teeth were white and even. I hadn't hurt them, and I was glad. But a wet red drop glowed on one of them, pulsing from a deep well in her lip.

"For a naked honkey, you move damn fast," she said with a certain betrayal of admiration.

"No wind resistance," I said ruefully. In the excitement I'd forgotten about my clothes.

She started to laugh.

"What's so funny, Minnehaha," I started, and then stopped.

She had lifted her head and was looking down towards her belly, and my gaze followed hers to my thighs, where my prick was twisted through the mesh.

"It tickles," she said with wanton gladness.

It's a tough racket, you know. Lots of times you find yourself in tight spots you can't pull out of. Things harden up, the going gets rough. No matter how you tussle with a problem, you can't sort it out. And then you get the break you need.

After that, it's easier. A pull here, a tug there and it all begins to unravel. But that's just the tinsel on the turnips. It's bare facts you need. And so you keep plugging away—examinations, legwork, a lot of bumping and grinding. But it's worth it. When a case breaks right, there's just no feeling like it.

So muscular and yet so soft: rigid, yielding flesh pressed against my body as I kissed her mouth, searching, then forcing her tongue to roll across my own. There was no going back now, even if we'd had to. A well throbbed through my body, breaking into the motion of erection in my cock. The rough cords of the mesh dress rolled between our flesh, biting across the blood-swelled nubs of her nipples, hurting them, and she tore her hands to her breasts to free them from the pain. But I held it against her tightly, pressing the blood away from her body in dark white squares. She gave a groan, and started to fight me just before I stopped and laughing at her, pulled a loose cord on the dress, unraveling it, reeling it into a ball in my hands. Her body tensed, waiting for its nudity.



And then suddenly it all went wrong. Something flipped me like a toy and I ended on my back, holding a yarn ball, living in terrible noise.

It was loud—I'll say that much. But the results weren't very pretty.

Explosions seldom are.

And this one was a doozy. Whoever'd planted it did his job right. The walls blew out around us in a corrugated mishmash of plaster, lath board, chicken wire and other trinkets and gewgaws that some damn fool had built into the house.

Dust rained around me and there was a sudden loud series of pops and I thought crazily, "A chandelier's exploding."

But it wasn't.

It was a good-sized full drum thirty caliber chum thumper, wielded by the soup man who was still trying to do the job right.

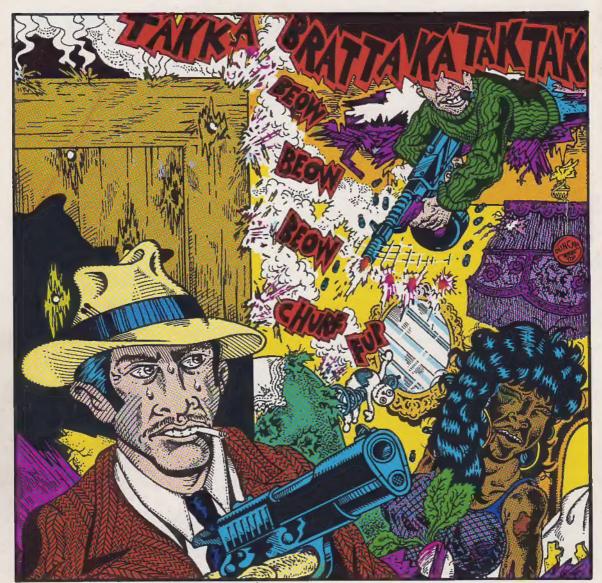
I took a rapid-fire gander around the room—or what was left of it. The first thing that caught my eye was the bodies—the white one and the black one—both of them pretty mangled by the debris and decoration. One of them was breathing. I wasn't sure which.

Bullets were humming about my head like bees in swarms.

No time to check up now. Let the living take care of the living. And some of the living were nasty. I had already gotten across the room, and using the unhinged closet door for a modicum of safety, I fired a couple of shots at the ceiling. The big .45 kicked with a sexual thump. It was pretty much a stand-off. I'd crossed him up by running through his firing and now he was on the wrong side of the hole. But he didn't let up for a minute.

The machine gun barrel bent awkwardly backwards through the hole and wild hot bursts of lead stitched plaster out of the wall and splinters out of the floor.

I tossed a couple more .45 slugs up there and tried to think of a plan.



OHOWARD ARNHEARST. 1947. COLOUR BY MICHELE BRAND.

Another burst rattled the room. Copper casings came clattering through to the floor like popcorn out of an overheated popper. Luckily the shots ripped up the outfield from left to the foul pole instead of hitting straight away.

But I knew they'd have another inning unless I did something fast. And I did. I drew a cross in the ceiling, about a foot and a half back of the hole, using the hand-held hot pipe I'd lifted off the black broad. Then, with the clip empty, I waited for the score.

They weren't long in totaling up. The chopper fell first, landed on its butt, and died. The jockey who'd ridden it came next. It took him a long time to fall.

His head flopped down through the hole: he'd pitched over at the waist like a moslem with his rug jerked. His arms fell loosely over his head, swung in an arc once or twice, and then flipped him down to the floor. He landed on his ass with his back to me, his head hunched into his shoul-

ders, and then he crumpled onto his side.

I went over to look at him. Small-time heavyweight material I decided. Low-caliber help for a caper like this. I couldn't figure it out.

And then I remembered the dames. I walked over to the one who still could make it. She was sitting on the floor, just looking at me. She didn't seem badly hurt, cuts and bruises mostly. One eye was black; I'd done that. For the rest, a wicked cut above one breast, oozing some now, and some scraped and bleeding thighs.

"Do you think you can stand up?" I asked her. She nodded, and smiling through her teeth, she

stood. I led her out of the room and down the hall to where I'd left my clothes.

"I'd better get dressed," I said.

"Not yet," she said. And reaching down, she gently took my cock. "Unfinished business is one thing I just can't stand."

(To be continued . . . )